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CHAPTER 1. CONTINUING EDUCATION

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CHAPTER 1. CONTINUING EDUCATION

1.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of this chapter is to describe continuing education activities and responsibilities.

1.02 AUTHORITY

Authorities for, and limitations on, the conduct of continuing education programs are contained in 5 U.S.C. 41; 38 U.S.C. 4121 through 5054; FPM chapter 410; MP-5, part I, chapter 410; and other authorities cited in M-8, part I, chapter 1.

1.03 DEFINITIONS

a. Continuing education is defined as that education and training which provides job relevant learning experiences for VA employees, on either a postgraduate or inservice basis. It includes administrative and career development training. It does not include education and training conducted as part of a residency, apprenticeship, or any other program which is designed to prepare an individual for an occupation or profession.

b. Continuing education activities are work related, centered around the acquisition or update of knowledge or skills, and are expected to result in better patient care or improved health care administration. Specifically, continuing education activities:

- (1) Improve employee performance of current duties;
- (2) Aid employees in maintaining specialized proficiencies;
- (3) Keep employees abreast of the state of the art; or
- (4) Provide employees with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for implementing changing policies and technology.

1.04 FACILITY CONTINUING EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Facility management is responsible for developing a program of staff continuing education. Assistance in various phases of developing this program (needs assessment, program design, and evaluation) can be provided by the appropriate RMEC (Regional Medical Education Center). In all these efforts, the hospital Education Committee, and appropriate subcommittees, provide advice to the facility Director. (See M-8, pt. I, ch. 3.)

b. The first step in developing a continuing education program is an assessment of the learning needs of the individual staff and the needs of the organization which can be met through educational activities. This needs assessment can be accomplished through a variety of activities, including self-assessment examinations, medical audits based on patient care appraisal, and individually perceived needs.

c. Educational activities to meet these needs are then identified or designed. Every effort should be made to use the continuing education programming available at nearby

university health science centers, schools of allied health professions, and other education institutions and agencies. In addition, each health care facility should develop its own inservice education and training programs. Educational programs should be planned in such a manner that appropriate credit can be obtained by attendees, whenever feasible, from recognized national, state, or local accrediting agencies.

d. Educational experiences should be evaluated to determine whether the activity has effected any change in the participants' attitudes toward patients, in skills or abilities in performing assigned duties, or in ability to discharge newly assigned responsibilities.

1.05 MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The Management Support Office (10A5) and the Office of Academic Affairs (145) cooperate on executive and mid-level management training activities which are directed toward providing a continuing source of competent managers at all levels. Additional information on the following programs is available from the Office of Academic Affairs (145):

- a. Career Field Manager Programs,
- b. Hospital Administration Residency Program,
- c. Cooperative Education Program, and
- d. Systemwide mid-level management training and development activities.